

BLUE CAP Blue Island Citizens for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Inc.

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Anthony Di Vittorio, Executive Director

www.blue-cap.org

September 7, 2011

Dear Human Services Commission,

My name is Anthony DiVittorio and I am the Executive Director of Blue Cap, a social service agency located in Blue Island Illinois that since 1967 has provided services and supports to children and adults with developmental disabilities. Currently Blue Cap is providing these services to over 300 individuals. These individuals and their families have come to depend on Blue Cap to understand and navigate the system so that they may receive the services and supports that many times are essential in order to live. They are vulnerable people whose fragile existence is magnified by a life long disability.

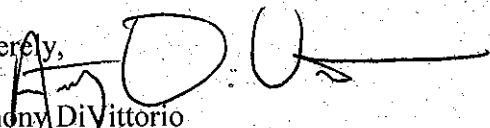
Today, the state faces an economy that challenges everyone. This challenge is magnified by the poor fiscal decisions of the past. But, is the answer to the current economic environment and systemic challenges to harm the people who in society are some of the most vulnerable? The state's practice of delaying payments to providers of vital services like Blue Cap as a way of solving its budget shortfalls is not a harmless tool without consequences for the people we serve.

Blue Cap also has to survive in these economic hard times. Our donors continue to give to our cause but they also struggle and today can't give as they wish they could, or as they have in the past. Our cost of operations continues to rise. The price of fuel, heat, electricity, insurance and a mountain of other expenses have increased while the last increase in funding from Illinois was back in 2007 and it was just 2.5%. This is not a stable foundation on which to provide services and supports to people.

In forcing Blue Cap to operate waiting to be paid for months at a time does more than create anxiety, it forces scarce resources to be diverted to pay interest on loans so that we can pay our staff and bills, and keep our doors open. It has forced us to refinance our buildings in order to build a cash flow, which in turn creates long term debt with long term implications. The payment delays with uncertain endings has forced Blue Cap to live day to day borrowing against tomorrow because the State of Illinois is not able to live up to it's current obligations today.

My hope for this Commission is not to make life easy for human service providers. My hope is that as Illinois has to make hard choices that involve hardship, that the pain we all must bear is spread appropriately among its citizens. Surely solving these challenges on the backs of people with disabilities and their families is not what anyone wants or supports.

Sincerely,


Anthony Di Vittorio
Executive Director
Blue Cap